Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses

This document, which is based on the guidelines described in the National Education Association's *Guide to Online High School Courses* (http://www.nea.org/technology/onlinecourseguide.html), is designed to assist in determining the quality and effectiveness of online courses.

	Not Evident (1)	(2)	(3)	Fully Evident (4)	Comments
CURRICULUM					
The online course is aligned with appropriate national, state and/or district standards for student learning.					
Student performance (learning) objectives are clearly stated.					
The performance objectives are clearly matched to the national, state, and/or district standards for the corresponding content area(s).					
The performance objectives are clearly matched to the developmental/grade level of the intended student population					
The performance objectives are articulated within a multi-leveled scope and sequence so students are adequately prepared for the next level of study.					
Assignments, projects, tests, and other artifacts of student work clearly reflect the desired performance outcomes for the course.					
Interdisciplinary content and activities are encouraged.					
The course contextualizes evaluated learning through links to at least two additional knowledge domains.					
The course provides an appropriate balance of exposure to a range of topics and deeper exploration of selected topics for student mastery.					
Even if intended as a survey course, the syllabus encourages in-depth exploration and analysis.					
INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN					
The course makes maximum use of the online medium by incorporating primary source materials, media, outside experts, and resources beyond the geography and culture of the students' brick-and-mortar classroom experience.					
Students interact with a variety of media and resources.					
The course includes resources and links to resources from outside the students' familiar culture and immediate geography.					

The course schedules include a variety of activities, both online and offline.					
The course facilitates learning from multiple viewpoints.					
The course supports different learning styles.					
Students are assigned relevant readings from appropriate print and/or web media.					
Students deepen an understanding of content through such activities as lab experiments, product design, and other hands-on activities.					
Students use writing to reflect on readings, projects, labs, and other assignments.					
The course fosters the development of "information Literacy" skills.					
Activities require students to use appropriate research strategies for finding appropriate online content.					
Students use strategies for evaluating the quality and credibility of web-based materials used in the online course.					
Issues of copyright, intellectual property, online privacy and protection are addressed.					
The course fosters the development of communication skills and the ability to collaborative online.					
Students participate in online group activities.					
The course includes regular, sustained and guided student-to-student discussion and collaboration.				.	
Student assignments include opportunities for multimedia presentation, products, and reports.					

TEACHER QUALITY

The online teacher has expertise in the subject matter being taught.					
The online teacher is formally prepared in the subject matter being taught.					
The online teacher is familiar with applicable state and national standards and curriculum for the content being taught.					
The online teacher provides appropriate connects between course content other curricular areas, and the real world.					
The online teacher utilizes effective teaching techniques.					

Description					
The online teacher is licensed in the discipline in which he or she is teaching the course.					
The online teacher utilizes effective strategies, matched to the content being taught, including methods for supporting inquiry, analysis, and synthesis of content.					
The online teacher applies a variety of instructional strategies to meet individual students' needs.					
The online teacher monitors student understanding and adjusts instruction to enable learning.					

The online teacher has frequent and timely interactions with students in the course.

Description					
The online teacher monitors student postings of work and discussions on regular basis.					
The online teacher provides appropriate feedback, guidance and direction and responds to student inquiries within 24 hours (Mon-Fri).					

The online teacher models personal attributes that support a learning environment.

Description					
The online teacher sets clear expectations and assumes a shared responsibility with the student to ensure that learning occurs.					
The online teacher's interactions with students, families, and communities are respectful and appropriate.					

The online teacher has been trained to teach online.

Description					
The online teacher has received training in online teaching that includes strategies for engaging and involving students in the online environment, appropriate use of online "voice", use of the technology involved, and ability to access support systems available to students and teachers.					

STUDENT ROLE

Students are active participants in a learning community based on student-to-student as well as student-to-teacher discussions.

Description					
Students post questions and respond to the comments and questions of other students on a regular basis.					
Student discussion with classmates are under the guidance of teachers who raise the level and broaden the scope of the discussions.					
Student/teacher dialogue is encouraged throughout the course.					

Discussion areas are clearly designed for communications among students, as are sites for private student/teacher interactions.				

Students' collaborative skills and teamwork are emphasized.

Student participate in team-based assignments and projects, as appropriate				
Students have adequate time to work in online groups.				

Students are encouraged to develop time-management and organizational skills.

Assignments are structured to require consistent efforts from students through the term.				
Expectations are made clear to students with respect to minimum amounts of time per week needed for online interactions, study, and homework assignments.				

Engaged learning, self-direction, and development of critical thinking skills encouraged.

Students engage in self-reflection, self-assessment, and evaluation as part of course work.				

ASSESSMENT

The online course clearly describes how student performance will be assessed.

Students are given criteria regarding the performance indicators of the course.				
The scoring rubric is made available so that all assessment criteria are available to the student.				
The course syllabus lists all required assignments, the weights given to each, due dates, and penalties for late submissions.				
Authenticity of student work is verified by appropriate means.				

Student learning is assessed on an ongoing basis and through a variety of methods.

Students are assessed by several different methods over the duration of the online course including such measures as: Contributions and responses to online discussions Completion of online assignments Portfolio submissions Special projects and/or presentations Creation of authentic products Tests and quizzes				

The online teacher provides fair, accurate, and timely assessment of student work.				
Students receive continual, timely, and constructive feedback on the quality of their work and mastery of course content.				
Students actively participate in evaluating their own work.				

MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS				
The online course is clear in its description of learning objectives, work required, and prerequisite skills or courses necessary for success.				
The course description is available to students and parents/guardians before registering.				
The description includes specific examples of course objectives, issues, concepts, and ideas that are covered in the course, in order to deepen student and parent understanding.				
Technical requirements for acceptable access are clearly stated.				
The online course provides the necessary registration, grading, and other administrative systems to facilitate student participation in the course.				
Individual course/career counseling is available to advise students about enrollment and participation in the online course, including assessments or counseling regarding the self-motivation and commitment necessary for success in an online learning environment.				
The school or school district where a student is enrolled or resides accepts the course for credit.				
Procedures for fees and payments are established and agreed upon by all parties before students enroll in a course.				
The academic calendar of the students and teacher is coordinated before the course begins.				

A professional support system is in place to ensure teacher success in delivering the online course.				
Teachers are provided professional development opportunities to assist them in improving their online teaching.				
Teachers have access to a network of other online practitioners to discuss pedagogical and curricular issues.				
Teacher evaluation is conducted in a manner that encourages growth and complies with contractual agreements.				
Course resources are available to support student success.				

A course orientation program or service exists for students.					
Students can access all ancillary materials necessary for the course.					
Students receive training and information to aid them in navigating the online environment and securing material through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services, etc.					
Student rights and responsibilities are recognized and upheld within the course structure.					
Students and parents/guardians sign an agreement on rights and responsibilities in the online course.					
Policies and systems are in place to address student complaints, appeals, and/or recourse if the online course is not delivered as described.					
A system is in place to deal with inappropriate student behavior and issues of discipline.					
A secure grading system is provided, with opportunities for students, parents/guardians, and school administrators to review grades as appropriate.					
Confidential management of student records for documentation of student achievement in each course is provided.					

The course is evaluated on a regular basis and improvements are made based on those evaluations.					
Students provide feedback about the quality of the course content, instruction, support systems, and infrastructure.					
Teachers provide feedback about course content, support systems and infrastructure					
Feedback from students and is utilized to make improvements and revisions to the course.					
Information on student completion rates is part of the course evaluation.					

TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The online platform provides necessary resources for effective delivery of the course.	

The online platform used for course delivery has the necessary system capacity to support the learning activities of the course.				
The online platform provides necessary tools for administrative functions such as enrollment, grading, maintenance of student records and storage of student work.				
The online platform provides appropriate tools for communication and collaboration.				
The course provider provides a clear description of the system's technical requirements.				

Adequate and timely support is available to the teacher and students when technical issues arise.

The course contains instructions on how to access technical information or post technical questions within the online course.				
Students and teachers receive timely (within 24 hours) and user-friendly responses to technical questions.				

Equipment for student involvement is adequate and meets universal service standards for students with special needs.

Students have access to appropriate hardware and software on a regular and convenient basis.				
Connection speeds are sufficient for communication and accessing all course materials.				